

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-16), member of the House Armed Services Committee, issued the following statement on the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012, which the Committee is considering today:

“The defense authorization bill ensures that our troops have the resources they need, provides military families with the support they deserve, and makes necessary investments to protect the United States from emerging global threats. The bill identifies areas to reduce inefficiencies, save money, and invest those savings into higher national security priorities to keep our country safe and support our troops.

“This legislation strengthens policies to detain and prosecute terrorists and ensures that no terrorist detainee can be brought into the United States. As a former military prosecutor, I strongly believe that trying detainees in military tribunals at Guantanamo Bay is the best way to hold terrorists accountable, keep them out of the United States, and prevent them from rejoining the fight.

“While I am concerned that some language in the bill keeps the wasteful extra engine project on life support, I am pleased that the bill does not include any funding for the development of that program, which both the House and Senate have now rejected. When we’re facing tight budgets and threats from around the globe, we cannot waste scarce tax dollars on a defense program that the Pentagon has said repeatedly it does not want or need.”

Rooney plans to offer three amendments that will:

- Increase research to assist servicemen and women struggling with substance abuse;
  - Explore the use of virtual reality technology to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD);
- and,
- Fund air-to-ground simulations for Air Force training.

“While we’ve made tremendous progress in improving mental health services for our troops and veterans, the high rates of suicide and invisible wounds like PTSD are clear evidence that we must do more to help those who serve our country. By expanding research and exploring cutting edge treatments and technologies, we can help ensure that our troops and veterans get

the care they need.”

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